

# American Opinion Summary

## Department of State

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Early reaction to the Administration's statement of the "case" for its Cuban policy. Facts representative of a substantial disagreement concerning the "threat" posed by Russian weapons and troops on the island.

Some declare that the White House has done "a good, clean, honest" job through the Defense Department of "pre-empting" public briefing and the President's consent on January 1. They constitute "a persuasive case for the attorney in our intelligence" and "a good case, too, for our present diplomacy," the Baltimore Sun asserts. With the Washington Post and Washington Star, the Sun sees Administration critics now "required to toe the line" the questions "they have been courted" "What would they do? Would they invade Cuba?"

Even some writers concede that the Administration's position must be respected" as regards the Russian threat, and absence of any threatening arms buildup. "We can accept Secretary McNamara's evaluation as factual," says the Philadelphia Inquirer, for "there is nothing to show him wrong in the extravagant and irresponsible claims made by some politically motivated critics" somewhat similarly, Scripps Howard's Wash. News.

"However, the Administration's defense of its policy in Cuba cannot erase" certain "glaring facts," opponents maintain. Cuba is an armed Soviet base, and so long as one remains so, "our security and that of our neighbors in Latin America will be seriously endangered," the Philadelphia Inquirer agrees. Scripps Howard stresses "the lack of absolute assurance which remains disturbing"; furthermore, it holds that the "importance of the nature of the weapons in Cuba "has been vastly over emphasized" by the Administration (also, Sen. Kennedy 1/1/63).

The Wall Street Journal asserts that "the most un reassuring thing about the whole business" is the "undeniable fact" that sizeable Soviet forces and modern weapons do remain in Cuba.

"Lack of any appearance of U.S. weakness" is protested by some. "There are other measures available to us, short of invasion," such as "a tight naval blockade" and "pressure on Khrushchev" to recall his troops (several sources: Wash. News, Phila. Inquirer; Sen. Springfield 1/1/63).

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